

REMARKSI. Introduction

In response to the Office Action dated February 14, 2002, claim 2 has been cancelled and claims 1, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 have been amended. Claims 1 and 3-35 remain in the application. Re-examination and re-consideration of the application, as amended, is requested.

II. Non-Art Rejections

In paragraphs (2)-(3) of the Office Action, claims 2-7, 9, 21-34 and 35 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite because of the use of "those customers."

Applicant's attorney traverses these rejections. The use of "those customers" does not require an antecedent basis (unlike "the customers," which would have an antecedent problem). Moreover, Applicant's attorney notes that the entire phrase comprises "only those customers," and is unaware of another phrase that conveys the same concept.

III. Prior Art RejectionsA. The Office Action Rejections

In paragraphs (3)-(4) of the Office Action, claim 35 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Zucknovich et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,940,843 (Zucknovich). In paragraphs (5)-(6) of the Office Action, claims 1, 8, 10-16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Burdick et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,148,307 (Burdick). In paragraph (7) of the Office Action, claims 2-7, 9, and 17-34 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Burdick in view of Melchione et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,930,764 (Melchione).

Applicant's attorney respectfully traverses these rejections.

B. The Applicant's Claimed Invention

Independent claim 1 is generally directed to a network connecting a plurality of self-service machines (SSMs), wherein each of the SSMs executes a relational database management system (RDBMS) that maintains a relational database stored on the SSM, and each of the relational databases stores information for only those customers that frequent the SSM.

Independent claim 21 is generally directed to a method of processing information in a network interconnecting a plurality of self-service machines (SSMs). A relational database management system (RDBMS) is executed on each of the SSMs, wherein the RDBMS maintains a relational database

stored on the SSM and each of the relational databases stores information for only those customers that frequent the SSM that executes the RDBMS. The information stored in the relational database is used to more effectively serve the customer at the SSM.

Independent claim 35 is generally directed to a relational database management system (RDBMS) executed by a plurality of self-service machines (SSMs) interconnected by a network, wherein each of the SSMs stores a relational database, and each of the relational databases stores information for only those customers that frequent the SSM.

C. The Zucknovich Reference

Zucknovich describes electronic distribution of research documents over the world wide web or other network to investors. A repository server receives research documents from contributors. A restriction subsystem server is selectively coupled to the contributor workstation. The restriction subsystem server which includes manages and stores "restriction" and "review" information of companies, relative to contributors. A contributor identifies (via electronic communication or otherwise) to the restriction subsystem server a "restriction" and/or "review" status of a company relative to the contributor. A particular company may be identified as "RESTRICTED" if the contributor has a current banking or financial interest in the company. Additionally, a company may be identified as "UNDER REVIEW" if the contributor believes its opinion about the company may change based on a news event. Moreover, a company may be identified as "UNDER EXTENDED REVIEW," if, for example, the contributor is not presently "covering" that company. Each time the repository server is queried for a list of reports or documents (i.e., document titles or headlines), the repository server determines whether to provide a particular title to the viewer workstation (via a viewer server or web server) to the user based on the restriction status of the contributor of the document relative to the restriction status of the company or companies associated with the document.

D. The Burdick Reference

Burdick describes data in disparate formats from different data sources which are reformatted into a common data format and stored in database servers serving one or more data sources such that each database server contains only a portion of the composite database. A client server and graphical user interface are provided for allowing a client to perform simple search requests on one database server, browse requests on all database servers, or serve complex search

requests on one or more database servers. The client server may reformat the resultant search data into one or more specific database formats for retrieval and manipulation by a specific database program or display the information for the client. The present invention has particular application to the semiconductor manufacturing field, for tracking data produced during the processes of semiconductor manufacturing.

E. The Melchione Reference

Melchione describes a sales process support system and method for identifying sales targets using a centralized database to improve marketing success. The system includes a central database that receives comprehensive information from a variety of internal and external feeds, and standardizes and households the information in a three-level hierarchy (households, customers, and accounts) for use by a financial institution. The comprehensive information stored on the central database is accessed through micromarketing workstations to generate lists of sales leads for marketing campaigns. A database engine is provided for generating logical access paths for accessing data on the central database to increase speed and efficiency of the central database. The system distributes sales leads electronically to branch networks, where the sales leads are used to target customers for marketing campaigns. The central database is accessed by workstations of a central customer information system for profiling customers, enhancing customer relationships with the financial institution, and electronically tracking sales and service performance during marketing campaigns. The system can also include a system for opening an account in a single session that is in communication with the central database, micromarketing centers, central customer information systems and branch systems of the present invention so that data can pass between these systems where legal and appropriate.

F. Applicant's Claims Are Patentable Over The Reference

Applicant's claims are patentable over the references because they recite a novel and nonobvious combination of elements. More specifically, the cited references do not teach or suggest the elements of independent claims 1, 21 and 35 directed to a network connecting a plurality of self-service machines (SSMs), wherein each of the SSMs executes a relational database management system (RDBMS) that maintains a relational database stored on the SSM and each of the relational databases stores information for only those customers that frequent the SSM. In addition, the cited

references do not teach or suggest the elements of independent claim 21 directed to using the information stored in the relational database to more effectively serve the customer at the SSM.

The Office Action cites Zuchnovich as teaching a relational database management system (RDBMS) executed by a plurality of self-service machines (SSMs) interconnected by a network, wherein each of the SSMs stores a relational database, and each of the relational databases stores information for only those customers that frequent the SSM.

The Office Action admits that Burdick does not teach the claimed limitation "each of the SSMs executes a relational database stored on the SSM," but nonetheless asserts that Burdick teaches the relationship between the data distributor and database servers within the distributed database, and that it would have been obvious to a person of an ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Burdick's teaching in order to distribute or update database servers in each server so that a user can save time for searching or retrieving data from different physical locations.

The Office Action asserts that Melchione teaches the claimed limitation "each of the relational databases stores information for only those customers that frequent the SSM," and argues that it would have been obvious to a person of an ordinary skill in the art at time invention was made to apply Melchione's teaching of the central customer information system containing a plurality of customer profiles, each customer profile including demographic information and customer financial goals to Burdick's system in order to keep track a user's profile at branch offices. Further, the Office Action asserts that Melchione teaches the claimed limitations "each of the relational databases stores information for only those customers that frequent the SSM that executes the RDBMS," and "using the information stored in the relational database to more effectively serve the customer at the SSM," as the central customer information system contains a plurality of customer profiles, each customer profile including demographic information and customer financial goals.

Applicant's attorney disagrees. Even when combined, the references do not teach or suggest the combination of elements shown in Applicant's independent claims 1, 21 and 35. Moreover, it would only be with hindsight for the Office to maintain that such a combination could be made and that the elements recited in Applicant's independent claims are obvious in view of the combination.

Specifically, the cited references, taken individually or in any combination, do not teach or suggest that each of a plurality of self-service machines (SSMs) in a network executes a relational database management system (RDBMS) that maintains a relational database stored on the SSM and each of the relational databases stores information for only those customers that frequent the SSM.

Moreover, none of the cited references teach or suggest using the information stored in the relational database to more effectively serve the customer at the SSM.

Instead, Zucknovich, Burdick and Melchione merely describe databases stored and accessed on servers, not on self-service machines, as that term is defined. For example, Zucknovich describes centralized database servers, and nowhere discloses self-service machines with their own databases. Burdick also describes centralized database servers, wherein each database server contains only a portion of the composite database, but also fails to disclose self-service machines with their own databases. In addition, Melchione describes a centralized database, which includes user profiles, but says nothing about self-service machines with their own databases.

Consequently, neither Zucknovich, Burdick nor Melchione describe storing information for only those customers that frequent the self-service machines in the relational databases stored on the self-service machines. As a result, neither Zucknovich, Burdick nor Melchione teach or suggest using the information for only those customers that frequent the self-service machines stored in the relational databases to more effectively serve the customers at the self-service machines.

Thus, Applicant's attorney submits that independent claims 1, 21 and 35 are allowable over the cited references. Further, dependent claims 3-20 and 22-34 are submitted to be allowable over the cited references in the same manner, because they are dependent on independent claims 1 and 21, respectively, and thus contain all the limitations of the independent claims. In addition, dependent claims 3-20 and 22-34 recite additional novel elements not shown by the cited references.

IV. Conclusion

In view of the above, it is submitted that this application is now in good order for allowance and such allowance is respectfully solicited. Should the Examiner believe minor matters still remain that can be resolved in a telephone interview, the Examiner is urged to call Applicant's undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,

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G&C 160.8-US-01

APPENDIX: VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

IN THE CLAIMS

Please cancel claim 2 and amend claims 1, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 as follows:

1. (AMENDED) A network connecting a plurality of self-service machines (SSMs), wherein each of the SSMs executes a relational database management system (RDBMS) that maintains a relational database stored on the SSM, and each of the relational databases stores information for only those customers that frequent the SSM.
4. (AMENDED) The network of claim [2] 1, wherein the SSM further comprises means for using the information stored in the relational database to market products and services to the customer at the SSM.
5. (AMENDED) The network of claim [2] 1, wherein operations for the relational database are directed to the SSMs based on the information stored in the relational database on the SSMs.
6. (AMENDED) The network of claim [2] 1, further comprising means for storing the information in relational databases on a plurality of the SSMs.
7. (AMENDED) The network of claim [2] 1, further comprising means for moving the information stored in the relational database among the SSMs.